

December 28, 1976

Dr. Nils Fries  
University of Uppsala  
Physiological Botany  
Box 540  
751 21 Uppsala, Sweden

Dear Nils,

It was very good indeed to hear from you again. The information you did send me, and Ed's letter from 1938, were indeed quite helpful and together with some other sources I think I now have quite a good picture about the period up to the time that Ed went to Stanford.

I am having some trouble now - after this long interval - unravelling the precise details of the discovery of the basic idea that nutritional deficiencies would reflect genetic mutations resulting in enzyme loss. The very casual statements that both he and Beadle have made at various times are somewhat inconsistent with one another, but I am afraid this is one of those matters that may be irretrievably lost as far as more precise analysis is concerned at the present time. Without better records I am afraid that almost any further comment would be pure speculation.

It has been so long since we have been in contact that I have to bring you up to date on some personal matters. Esther and I separated just 10 years ago and I have been remarried since 1968. I am very glad to say that we have a very charming little girl who really does bring a lot of sunshine into our household. Marguerite is a psychiatrist who is on a particularly busy work-schedule, so you can imagine that life is anything but uninteresting.

I will, of course, send you a copy of the paper when it is completed - it may be some months before it is finally done as I am still trying to see what material can be properly collected once and for all.

With all best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics

JL/rr